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# Inaugural Address

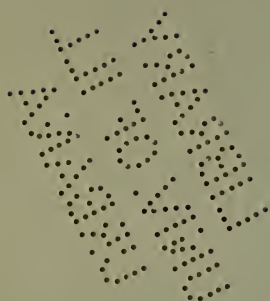
OF

REV. W. P. KANE, D. D.,

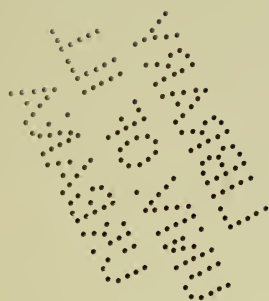
As President of

Wabash College

Crawfordsville,  
Indiana,  
Feb. 22, 1900.







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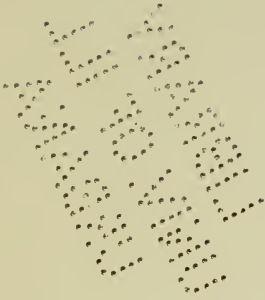
OF

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## Inaugural Address.

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In these closing years of the century the attention of men is concentrated as never before on the importance which attaches to the place and problems of education. Two facts stand out prominently in this connection. The first is the enlarged conception we have gained of the province and meaning of education in the purpose of life and in the affairs of men. We are coming more and more to understand that education is not a detail or incident of life, but its hidden secret and its determining force; and that things with which we have to do in this world are significant in proportion as they affect the processes of education for good or for evil. The supreme test of any truth or idea or institution is its educational value.

The educational idea reaches its climax when we understand that it is the underlying philosophy and the final goal of religion; for religion itself is but an endless process of the unfolding and enrichment of the powers bound up in our being. No man is suddenly transformed by ecstatic experience, but gradually and patiently fashioned anew by the divine forces that work on him and within him. We no longer look for the sudden rolling of the great world out of shadow into light. We begin to understand that a long and painful education lies between the sinful and ignorant world of to-day and the wise and righteous world of a thousand years hence.

The Bible assumes new and larger meaning when we read it as the history of the divine process by which God Himself, the Great Teacher, has been through the ages slowly educating the race out of ignorance and weakness into spiritual vision and moral strength. The family, the State, the manifold business affairs of men are never truly understood until they are recognized as parts of the great educational forces that are shaping and developing human life.

Just in proportion as we grasp this profounder and vaster meaning of education as it has to do with the whole course of living, so shall we prize the special institutions and appointments that have to do directly with the training of mind and the development of power. And so the college and the various institutions of learning are accorded a recognition today that they have never had before. There has never been so widespread, and, on the whole, so intelligent an interest in educational questions as at the present moment.

The second significant fact is the sharply critical attitude of the age toward traditional ideas and methods in education. This is almost inevitably a result of the intensified interest and increased appreciation to which I have referred. That which has to do so directly and so vitally with every supreme interest deserves the most critical and searching attention. So old-time theories of education are being called to judgment, and long-established methods are compelled to justify their claims or give place. This is not a matter for regret but rather for congratulation. Whatever is worthy will be freshly approved under arraignment, and that which is unworthy ought to go. It is not a matter of surprise, therefore, that in these days we should read and hear much about the "new education," with its superior claims.

It is not my purpose on this occasion to take your time a for review or discussion of the controverted points between the old and the new. I am in hearty sympathy with the spirit of progress. I have no reluctance in surrendering whatever the changes of progress make necessary. Nothing is to be defended simply because it is venerable. There are certain great features and ideas, however, in education that are fundamental, and there are certain institutional outgrowths of these ideas that are as permanent and as vital as that out of which they have grown. It is with a view of emphasizing my

convictions on this point that I have selected as my theme for this occasion "The Historic Old-Fashioned College; Its Place and Function in the Educational World." Allow me to explain just what I mean by "the historic old-fashioned college." Perhaps I should begin by elimination.

1. I do not mean a stereotyped curriculum. There are certain lines and courses of study that are fairly entitled to be called historic. They have come down to us out of the past bearing the approval not only of age, but of ripened fruits as well. Yet it does not follow that they are the best possible. Almost a new world with its wealth of knowledge has opened to us since these historic courses were formulated.

2. I do not mean by the historic college an inflexible adhesion to traditional methods of teaching. Some of them were good: many of them were crude and faulty and deserve to give place, as they have, to that which is better, for "the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns."

3. I do not mean necessarily by the historic college the old-time connection between the church and the school. Historically, that connection is very close, and, in a sense vital. For long ages the church nurtured almost exclusively the world's institutions of learning, great and small, and in the nature of things the bond between the church and the school is a close one. Each is, in a sense, dependent on the other. Neither do I believe that the college is necessarily a branch of ecclesiasticism.

There are, however, certain specific educational aims and principles which may be regarded as distinctive of the historic college, and are so fundamental that they are not affected by surface changes. They have come down to us through the ages. They underlie and give individuality to the college today. I believe they are so fundamental that they assure the importance and permanence of the college for the future. Let me mention and emphasize some of these underlying principles and aims characteristic of the old-fashioned college.

First of all, the historic college is built on the idea that its work is *to educate men*. Not simply to educate the intellect nor to train the hand or the eye or any other fractional part, but to educate the *man himself*. The work of the old-fashioned college is to lay the

foundation for a complete manhood. Its aim is not to make specialists, but to make men; to furnish through its courses of instruction and through all the appointments of its influence that which will bring to the student a well-rounded development and discipline of mind and body and spirit, so that he shall be able to step forth from the college not only conscious of his powers, but in command of them—able to summon and direct them in this channel or that which he may choose for a life-work. With that ability it will be no great task for him to become a specialist in any line which he may elect. Without that ability he never can become a specialist of real power. He lacks the foundation on which to build. Steadfast height always means steadfast depth. The higher the oak goes into the air the deeper its roots strike into the ground. The tent which is erected in its place tonight only to be taken down tomorrow needs no laying of deep foundations, but the castle which is to stand for centuries, and which will have to resist, again and again, the shock of war, must have foundations which go deep into the ground and extend broadly beneath the stately walls. Height without breadth or depth has no stability. It is like the balloon rolling among the clouds or the reed up-springing in the sunshine to be snapped in twain by the first blasts of the storm. Every great structure in the realm of nature or in the realm of spirit must be built on broad foundations.

Nothing has contributed so much to the success of the German system of education as the fact that the years of school life are devoted to the acquiring of a culture as broad and as deep as possible, on whose firm foundation the youth at the university may fearlessly build his specialty. President Mark Hopkins, one of the noblest educators of the century, once said that "the strength, the excellency of the New England system, is that it aims to produce, and does produce, a broad and thorough culture of the whole man; that it lays strong and deep foundations for future building." First is the broad foundation, then the narrow specialty; first the laying of course after course of heavy stones underground, then the heavenward stretch of the spire. The youth thus trained can carry his specialty to a point undreamed of by one trained in a narrower fashion; for the deeper and broader are the foundations the higher can be carried the narrowing shaft of the spire. Where there are no foundations at all there can be no permanent building skyward.

I know this is not popular doctrine. We live in an age of hurry: the spirit of haste is everywhere. The traveler asks for the shortest route and the quickest train. The student is impatient to reach what he calls the end; that is, to get into his life-work. Foundation-laying is toilsome. It seems to be barren of any present or adequate result. It is out-of-sight work. No walls are rising, and it is not easy for the impatient youthful mind to grasp the full meaning of the connection between the foundation and the superstructure. Nevertheless that connection exists, and it is vital. It is with this foundation-work that the old-fashioned college has largely to do. It is concerned not so much about the finishing as about the beginning; not so much about the particular channel in which the awakened and trained powers shall be directed, but in their unfolding and discipline. The individual interest in the mill often makes the owner so solicitous about the current in the sluice-way that he is forgetful of the river. In other words, the college has to do with the making of a man who may or may not afterward become a specialist. Its purpose is not to train men for specific functions, but for the supreme function of living.

The man must precede the teacher, the artist, the writer, the successful achiever in any particular line. The first essential is not that the man shall know something, but that he shall be something; for that matter, that is the last essential as well as the first. Therefore, I argue that the chief concern of education has to do with the qualities of manhood—mental, physical, moral and spiritual. It is not clear that the same methods and processes that are fitted to direct trained powers into proper channels are also fitted for the development and discipline of these same powers. Here, then, is the legitimate work of the college. It is fundamental and persistent; it yields to no invasion; it acknowledges no successor; it is in no danger of being superseded.

I do not overlook the attempts that have been made, and that are being made, to combine the college and professional school. The attempts seek justification on the plea that life is too short to give to each its distinct place and period; that in the interest of haste compromise and combination must be resorted to. It is urged that a young man cannot afford to give so many years of his early life to the work of preparation; that the absorbing activities that wait for him are too pressing. But that is not a full statement of the case. I



admit the urgency, but the demand is not simply for men, but for men strong enough to grapple with the problems that are to be solved. The result turns not so much on when we arrive, as on what it is that arrives. In the end it will be found that an institution cannot in four years do the work of both college and university. It will also be found that the work of the college can neither be curtailed nor omitted without serious loss. The most potent factor in this world next to the divine is man.

Let us keep clearly before us the distinction between the man and his furnishings—his equipment; the man and the knowledge which the mind acquires. To know how to get knowledge and to be able to command it is of more importance than the knowledge itself. President Eliot puts the truth strongly when he says, "the real purpose of education is not knowledge, but power to get knowledge." In the workman the trained hand is of more importance than the tool which it holds; although it needs the tool for its work. The trained mind is more important than the hand which it commands, although the hand is an indispensable servant. So the scholar is more than his scholarship; the thinker is more than the thought which he produces. It is important that the soldier have good weapons. It is still more important that the weapons be in the hands of a thoroughly trained soldier. An army of well-trained men, calm, steady, resolute, even though equipped with inferior weapons, will be more than a match for a similar number of men lacking drill, but with fine equipment. In the office it is the clear head and the well-balanced judgment that master an emergency rather than the expert accountant.

Wherever you turn in the affairs of life it is the man that counts rather than his special equipment in this particular line or that. Not that equipment is unnecessary or that it is to be undervalued, but it is of secondary value. It is important to have both, but it is also important to keep the emphasis where it belongs. If either be curtailed, let it be the one of lesser significance. If either be sacrificed, let it not be that which is fundamental and without which the other counts for but little. In other words, the old-fashioned historic college stands for that which is fundamental in education. It has not given place and will not. Current judgment may be swayed and turned aside for a while toward this substitute or that, but it is bound to come back when it has had time to recover.

I am not calling in question either the value or the necessity of the university or the various grades of technical schools that are being multiplied throughout the land. I most heartily believe in them. They have their place and an important work to perform, I do not believe, however, that such institutions supersede the historic old-fashioned college, I do not believe they can do the work that the college has done and is doing today. There need be no antagonism; there should be no unfriendly disparagement. Each in its legitimate work should be an incitement and aid to the other.

It may be objected that in this discussion I have assumed that there is no disciplinary value in the study pursued in strictly professional work. I would not state it so broadly as that. Doubtless there is some disciplinary effect resulting from strictly professional training, but it is not strong; it lacks fiber. It is not sufficient to furnish the real power that gives mastery; and so I argue that that method of education that keeps uppermost the thought of what is to be done for and in the man himself is more important than that which places the emphasis on what is going to be placed within his grasp. I do not share in the fear expressed by some that the college, and especially the small college, is doomed. I do not believe it. It holds its place by sovereign right, and will hold it.

There are three obvious stages of study correlated and distinct—the elementary, the disciplinary and the specializing. Neither can do the work of the other, and in the order of advance neither can do its work without the other. The college that recognizes its own place and function is in no danger of being supplanted. It needs only to be steadfast and self-respecting. It has no occasion either to imitate or quarrel. Let it do its work, and do it well. Let it recognize its pre-eminent task as disciplinary, its investigation primarily and mainly for the development of the investigator, and it will hold its place in the future as it has in the past. Some range must be conceded to the spirit of experimentation which has entered into the souls of educators, but it is safe to predict that the field of the college will remain when present uncertainties have passed away, and that in its field the college will be supreme. The university will be built on, but not out of, the college.

The second thing I want to emphasize is that the historic old-fashioned college proceeds on the conviction that *the masterspring of the man is the moral nature*. It not only believes that man has a

moral nature and that it deserves to be recognized, but that the moral nature holds the key to his highest possibilities, both mental and physical. The close connection between the historic college and the church is not an accidental connection. The fact that the school is the outgrowth of the church rather than the church an outgrowth of the school is profoundly significant. One is germinal, the other resultant. That which touches the moral nature quickens the mind also. The moral reacts on the mental.

Many an intellectual giant has slumbered until the springs of his moral nature were touched. Luther had never moved Germany and the world had he not first been moved by the love of Christ. His own testimony was that he studied best when he prayed most. Fellowship with God gave him mental strength and moral courage to think strongly, and ability to stand alone against the intellectual and royal array of the world. John Wesley might have been a pragmatic failure all his days if God had not touched him. The divine anointing made him the greatest reformer of his time. A great prelate remarks that no one can open his mind far enough to take in the idea of God without admitting a troop of lesser ideas at the same time. Note the effect of the vivid preaching of a pure theism on the Saracen mind. It aroused that torpid Semitic race, and while its inspiration lasted made them all conquering. Indeed, we can almost grade the civilization of a people by their notion of God. The moral nature, then, is a large factor in the strictly educational problem. But it presents other phases not less significant nor important.

The presence or absence of distinctively moral or religious influence in connection with educational training will have large effect in shaping and molding the character, the ideals and standards of the student for life. It touches him at a critical period of unfolding. The responsive mind of childhood has given place to the inquisitive and doubting mind of boyhood and young manhood. The problems being constantly thrust on him as a part of his studies bring him face to face with the profoundest questions in morals and religion. The problems of science are becoming more and more genetic problems; that is, they have ceased to be questions of classification and have come to be questions of origin—origin of force, of life, of species; of mind, of language, of society, of civilization, of religion.

It is as clear as noonday that the science professor cannot discuss



these questions without abutting on the final issue and pronouncing for a God or no God, a Providence or no Providence, a soul or no soul. There is no alternative. Science henceforth must be materialistic or spiritualistic, theistic or atheistic. God or no God is the question of the hour, and it is astonishing—sometimes even appalling—to observe how scientists are dividing into antagonistic types. This is the realm into which the student's daily work brings him. He is not only learning facts of science, but he is reaching conclusions as to what lies back of these facts, and in these conclusions he needs guidance, not less than in tracing the facts themselves.

It is to be borne in mind also that the college student is, as a rule, away from home, from its religious atmosphere, and its wholesome restraints. All of these bonds have been severed at once. He is thrown into the intense inquisitive life of the college, where these questions of cause, force, Providence, duty and destiny are up for discussion. Who is to guide him in his inexperience and danger, and what kind of guidance shall it be? He is surrounded by young spirits buoyant with a new sense of liberty and unsoubered by a sense of responsibility. Eliminate from such a situation as this any positive moral and religious guidance, and two things will certainly follow: Skeptics will be confirmed in their unbelief and believers will become ashamed of their faith. I do not believe I have overdrawn the situation. If it be true that the best education requires the unfolding of the entire man, moral and spiritual as well as mental and physical, then there should be such force at work in an educational institution as will appeal to the whole man. If it be true that the religious man is a broader, better, safer man than the irreligious, then adequate effort should be put forth to this end while the man is in the process of making.

I do not believe that the college can escape responsibility at this point. The moral nature is not an incident, and the part it has to play in connection with manhood is no subordinate part. It must determine more than any other factor the value of his scholarship to the world. During these years there are in process of formation ideals of life, underlying and controlling aims and convictions which are to furnish not only the setting for his scholarship, but which shall, to a large extent, determine the use he is to make of it. What the world needs is not simply nor mainly minds stored with scientific

or classical knowledge; hands trained in scientific skill; experts along professional lines of service. It needs these, and there should be no disparagement of them; but it needs back of these, and as a condition of their highest use, such a training and molding of the moral nature—through a man's aims, ideals and principles—as that he shall be thoroughly and irrevocably grounded in the great principles of righteous living and righteous achieving.

Education is not an end, but a means. Its fruitage is in the man. The real test of its worth is the kind of life it fashions and develops. More and more clearly we are coming to see that living is the supreme thing for which men are sent into this world, and that to this supreme activity everything is subordinate. The real question is not the form of political order, but the righteousness, the healthfulness, and happiness of those who live and work under its protection; not the theory of society, but the building up of sound-hearted men; not the growth of art, but that rich unfolding of heart and mind under the pressure of experience, which is the soil out of which art springs; not the framing of a theologian's system of divinity, but making men reverent and righteous throughout the length and breadth of their activities.

It is not necessary that a college be sectarian to meet these demands; it is not necessary even, perhaps, that should it be denominational; it is necessary that it be positively and strongly religious. In this respect again the historic old-fashioned college has not been outgrown. It has stood, and still stands, for high-grade masterly scholarship, hand in hand with a reverent and devout recognition of the claims and needs of religion.

I name as a third characteristic of the historic college the fact that it has always placed great emphasis *on the personal influence and the molding power of the teacher*. We cannot state too strongly that which ought to be self-evident, but which unfortunately, is oftentimes overlooked; this, namely, that the real strength of an educational institution is not in its buildings, its libraries, its laboratories, its courses of study, but in the quality of its teachers. The college is not, be it remembered, a collection of stately buildings: it is always a body of living men. The question is not so much what is taught and how much, but how and by whom. Some one has pithily said "a dead language taught by a living man is better than

a living language taught by a dead book." It goes without saying that in these days a teacher must be a thorough scholar and a master in his department. But what I am now emphasizing is not so much his scholarly ability, as his personality—the quality of his manhood. That, if it be large and genuine, stamps itself indelibly and counts for more as an educational factor than any other one thing, perhaps more than all other things.

If I were to ask any one of you who has been out of college for ten years or more to state what remains with you as the most practical and helpful part of your college course, I venture the testimony would be that it was the abiding inspiration of contact with a great, strong noble personality possessed by some teacher.

President Garfield, in an address before a convention of teachers, once said: "It has long been my opinion that we are all educated, whether men, women, or children, far more by personal influence than by books or the apparatus of the schools. If I could be taken back into boyhood today and had all the laboratories and appliances of a university, with ordinary routine professors, offered me on the one hand, and on the other a great, luminous, rich-souled man like Mark Hopkins in a tent in the woods, alone, I would say, give me Dr. Hopkins for my college course rather than any university with only routine professors. The privilege of sitting down before a great clear-headed, large-hearted man and breathing the atmosphere of his life, and being drawn up to him, and lifted up by him, and learning his methods of thinking and living, is itself an enormous educating power. But America is running too much to brick and mortar. Let us put less money in great schoolhouses and more in the salaries of great teachers. Smaller schools and more teachers, less material and more personal influence, will bring forth fruits higher and vaster than any we have yet seen.

Dr. Parkhurst of New York presents not less forcibly the opposite experience. He says: "Manhood is the best commodity our colleges can turn out—splendid vigor of mind and morals; and only manhood can foster manhood. There is not a college graduate among us but knows how many of our institutions of learning are cluttered up with little dignitaries, curiosities outside the museum: bipedal grammars; lexicons going about in coat and trousers and whose touch is not a baptism. Not a graduate of us but would be

a greater, richer and more luscious man today if we had not for four years of our lives been held in forced contact with so much commonplace material and cultivated diminutiveness in the shape of tutors and professors who could amuse us with their erudition, but who could not work in us a profound inspiration."

Emerson, referring to the same kind of imbecility, exclaims: "How can I hear what you are saying when all the time what you are is thundering in my ears?"

That is rather harsh, almost savage delineation, but it has the virtue of truth as well as of frankness. The teacher is always more than the task he sets. His personality exalts or belittles his work. The real teacher is more than a drill-master. This personal element in education is in danger of being undervalued just now when so much is being said about material equipment and elaborate courses. It is one of the factors, however, that has held an important place in the historic college, and which constitutes one of the strong claims of the college today, and especially of the small college.

The small college affords opportunity for direct contact between student and teacher as the large institution cannot do. It fosters individuality. Every teacher comes to know every student, and life touches life. Some one has said that if Socrates had been at the head of a university there would have been no Plato. The inference is perhaps rather sweeping, but there is no questioning the fact that what Plato felt Socrates to be was quite as much to him as what he heard Socrates say.

I need hardly say that what I have described as characteristic of the old-fashioned historic college is my thought and my ambition for Wabash. It is in accord with what she has been; it defines what she hopes to become more grandly in the future. Of her record I need say but little. Not only throughout the central West, but throughout the land she is known and honored for her high standard of scholarly work maintained through all her history.

It shall be our aim not only to perpetuate that record, but, as opportunity affords, to advance and exalt it, and I pledge you today that no effort shall be lacking that is necessary to make Wabash College morally and spiritually a safe, healthful and inspiring place for the upbuilding of Christian manhood. Ranking among the pioneer colleges of the West, she has for almost seventy years stood for that

which is highest and best in educational ideals and methods and results. Her founders were men of great purpose and great faith. Among her instructors from the very beginning were those who have been accorded easily a place among the foremost educators of their day. Her four presidents have been the acknowledged peers of any in the land, two of them yielding their office only with their lives; a third graciously spared in the evening of his life to linger among the associations and monuments that bear the impress of his thirty years of noble and heroic service. Nor would I fail to mention in this list my immediate predecessor, who, on account of previous engagements, is prevented from sharing in the services of today. I feel that it is no small honor and no light responsibility to stand, as I do today, the successor of such men and the official representative of such an institution.

Gentlemen of the Board of Trustees—I am not insensible of the honor you have done me in the expression of your confidence in twice placing before me this open door of service through which I enter today. Your kindly preferment is doubly appreciated because of the fact that with most of you I have been permitted for more than a decade to share the responsibility of official trust in behalf of the college. To the continuance of your intelligent and efficient devotion to the affairs of the college I must look largely for the successful carrying forward of the work you have placed in my hands.

To my associates in the faculty I turn with grateful confidence, realizing that on their constant co-operation and counsel I must depend in carrying the responsibilities you have imposed on me. I need not speak in this presence today of what they are and of what they have been to the college. United in one common ambition for Wabash, unsparing in their devotion and interest to her and her students, and, without boasting, I am prompted to add unsurpassed in their scholarly fitness for their work.

To the alumni the college ever turns with pride and confidence. Old and young they are still “her boys.” They can never get beyond the limits of her household ties. Their successes are hers and her successes are theirs. Many of them in the achievements of life have made her name known and honored throughout the world. Wabash is proud of her sons. She is the mother of Gracii. On their unfailing devotion she must depend largely in the future. Speak of her often and be generous in her praise. Fail not to give



her your strong right hand when she needs your help. And when I speak of her sons who call her Alma Mater, I cannot but link with them in almost equal affection and honor a still larger company who for longer or shorter terms dwelt under her roof and feasted at her table, but went forth before they reached their majority; I mean the non-graduate students of other days whose love and loyalty to the dear old college is not less sincere nor less valued. Your names are on her record and are proudly spoken when she counts her treasures.

Wabash has had her noble benefactors who, out of their treasures, great and small, have enriched her with their gifts. These gifts have made it possible for her to be what she has been for seventy years—a pioneer in a new land and a center of controlling influence in a great commonwealth. She needs them yet if she is to hold her place of leadership. Amid the rapidly multiplying demands that press on her she must have larger financial resources than yet have been supplied. She deserves this, and I believe she will have it.

There is one other appeal which comes from the depths of my heart today and which may properly claim its place at the close of this address. I cannot express it more eloquently or more fittingly than by quoting the words spoken on a similar occasion almost forty years ago by one whose name is loved and whose lifework is honored by every friend of Wabash and whose presence with us today is as a benediction. I quote from the inaugural of ex-President Tuttle delivered July 24, 1862. He said:

“I cannot suffer this occasion to pass without an appeal to the churches and ministers of Indiana and the Central West. This college is the child of your piety. You prayed it into existence; its struggles hitherto have endeared it to you, and I hear you saying with fondness and pride, ‘This is our college.’ This is right. Pray for this college when you meet in the sanctuary; pray for it at your family altars; pray for it in your closets, and Wabash College will become dear to you ‘as the apple of your eye.’ Send your sons hither to catch the infection of its literary atmosphere, and take her to your heart of hearts. Then shall your college wax in strength and beauty. Not merely will she become your boast, but the right arm of your power in the conflicts you are waging on the world’s most glorious battlefield.”













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Inaugural address of Rev. W.P. Kane D.



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